



## **DELAWARE OFFICE OF DRINKING WATER**

The Division of Public Health's (DPH) Office of Drinking Water (ODW) enforces the federal Safe Drinking Water Act in Delaware. ODW assures safe drinking water through comprehensive monitoring, technical assistance, and public education.

It is essential for Delawareans to depend on clean, safe drinking water. Delaware residents use approximately 101 million gallons of public water daily for drinking, cooking, and bathing. About 85% of Delawareans get their drinking water from public systems and the remainder gets their drinking water from private wells.

### **Office of Drinking Water services**

- 1. Monitoring** – ODW protects Delaware's public drinking water by sampling and testing for more than 80 chemical and bacterial contaminants. Staff monitors 490 public water systems in accordance with State and Federal regulations. Sampling frequency depends on detected contaminants.
- 2. Sanitary Surveys** – ODW performs sanitary surveys on public water supplies. Sanitary surveys evaluate the sources, treatments, and storage facilities of public water systems. They discover defects that compromise water quality or safety.
- 3. Technical Assistance** – By investigating various water system components, ODW determines the cause of problems and suggests solutions. Staff provides advice about operating and maintaining equipment. Staff also identifies training needs and provides planning assistance.
- 4. Plan Review** – ODW engineers review plans for new drinking water systems and proposed modifications to existing systems. This review process assures owners and users of public drinking water systems that systems are mechanically safe and can deliver water to consumers efficiently and safely.
- 5. Operator Certification** – State law requires operators of public water systems to be certified. Operators are required to maintain an active license by attending trainings, workshops, or seminars to earn continuing education credits. A minimum of 12 credit hours is required every two years for license renewal.
- 6. Laboratory Inspections** – Private laboratories that analyze Delaware's drinking water are inspected every three years and must complete required proficiency tests annually. ODW and the Delaware Public Health Laboratory review test results to determine if a laboratory should be certified to analyze a particular compound.

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**7. Infrastructure Improvement Financing** – The Drinking Water State Revolving Fund is a loan program that assists public water systems by financing infrastructure improvements. Applicants must detail how a loan will achieve or maintain compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act requirements.

**8. Capacity Development** – Capacity Development provides a framework for the State and public water systems to ensure that systems acquire and maintain technical, managerial, and financial capabilities for consistently providing safe drinking water to their customers.

**Private well inspections**

Delaware does not regulate water quality for private wells. ODW recommends that private well owners sample their well water annually for chemical and bacteriological contaminants.

**Private well testing**

Well owners can either purchase test kits or use a private laboratory to test private well water. A test kit costs \$4 each and contains two bottles — one to test for chemicals and one to test for bacteria. They may be purchased at these DPH locations:

**New Castle County**

Chopin Building  
258 Chapman Road  
Newark, DE 19702  
302-283-7100

**Kent County**

Thomas Collins Building  
540 S. DuPont Highway  
Dover, DE 19901  
302-744-1000

**Sussex County**

Thurman Adams State Service Ctr.  
546 S. Bedford Street  
Georgetown, DE 19947  
302-856-5241

**Delaware Public Health Laboratory**

30 Sunnyside Road  
Smyrna, DE 19977  
302-223-1520

To find laboratories certified to test Delaware drinking water, visit <http://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/hsp/dwlabcert.html>.

**For more information**

Contact ODW at 302-741-8630 or fax 302-741-8631. Routine operating hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays.

Visit ODW at <http://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/hsp/odw.html> or in the Edgehill Shopping Center at 43 S. DuPont Hwy., Dover, DE 19901.

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